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COWARD AND PATRIOT.¹

THE 3d of January, 1895, was, according to the traditional chronology, the two thousandth anniversary of Marcus Tullius Cicero's birth. Surely it will be generally agreed that such a day should not pass unmarked. There are few men throughout all history who have played so many parts, and in so interesting a manner, upon the stage of life.

A portion of his supreme importance is, indeed, an accident of survival. His copious philosophical dialogues, in particular, are in the main transcripts from Greek originals, and only the loss of the Epicurean and other sources makes these books indispensable. Even his works on the history and theory of Roman rhetoric are doubly precious because no rival or preceding orator survives, even in a single speech. His correspondence, again, is in many directions our only resource for light on political events, upon the one hand; or upon the other, for the idioms of colloquial Latin. This, too, is what we call, perhaps irreverently, an accident.

But in political and legal oratory, at least, his leadership among Romans would hardly be questioned, even if some miracle had preserved all of the masterpieces of Latin eloquence. As a stylist, also, the imperial adjective *Ciceronian*

¹ This paper was read, nearly in its present form, as a lecture, at Swarthmore College, on the anniversary referred to, January 3, 1895. A few old Bryn Mawr students may also recognize in it a sort of "specimen brick" from the courses of lectures on Greek and Latin literature given there during 1892-94. The article on Cicero in the "Library of the World's Best Literature" sets forth the same general views, but is entirely distinct, it is believed, in phrasing, as well as on a much briefer scale. W. C. L.

does but justice to his unrivaled services. He, almost single-handed, made the Latin language all it was capable of becoming. Five great literatures, including our own, bear his stamp and impress of mastery to-day.

These things are indeed the most threadbare commonplaces of scholarship, hardly to be repeated even on bimillennials. But Cicero also claims a place among the heroic champions, in happy or evil days, of civic liberty. As men even yet rejoice in the triumphs of Aristides and Timoleon, of William the Silent and John Hampden, of Washington and Lincoln, so do we still regret the noble failures of Demosthenes and Rienzi, of Andreas Hofer, and Louis Kosuth. It is essentially upon Cicero's claim to a place in this latter group of moral heroes and martyrs for liberty that I attempt to pass judgment.

It has been said, doubtless often said, that we know too much about Cicero; too much, no doubt, for his own fair fame in certain respects, and certainly too much to permit a curt and unqualified judgment upon his character. A drawing in which every stone, every crevice, crack, and break can be traced is not the one in which the character of a great cathedral is most easily seen. Prof. Gildersleeve tells us emphatically in one of his essays that much of Cicero's literary output may most profitably be left unread: a comforting word from a student whom none will suspect of sinning through indolence. Certainly the intelligent and critical reading of all Cicero's works would be an adequate task for a lifetime. Happily for such a purpose as our present question we need not sift all the materials available before stating some conclusions. Rather, as in Boswell's Johnson, certain traits shine forth almost equally clear upon any page we may chance to open; and in Cicero the Johnson and the Boswell, the subject and the delineator, are one.

We cannot discuss clearly the great crises of Cicero's life in succession without first sketching in our general impressions of the background against which that life stands. It is literally the cardinal period in Roman if not in human history. Opinions of its character have always differed

widely, and perhaps always must diverge. Our knowledge, though bewilderingly rich in detail, is of course really most imperfect and fragmentary. And yet, some opinion about Cæsar and Cicero, just as about Homer and the *Iliad*, every thoughtful student must form.

It seems plain that the days of Cicero were spent in an age for which he was ill-fitted. In this respect his life-story is much more tragic even than that of Demosthenes. The Greek orator had to appeal to an ease-loving people, degenerate indeed, yet not absolutely, but only by comparison, ignoble; a folk still truly the Athenian, fairly homogeneous, apparently, in blood, conscious of and still proud of their ancestry, knowing well what their true policy was, though not willing in ordinary times to sacrifice their personal comfort. Demosthenes's fight was a losing one: perhaps inevitably a losing one from the first, though that is not self-evident. But his duty was clear and simple. The foe was outside the gates, hardly even a Greek at all. He was always the true leader, and sometimes all Athens followed as one man. The path of honor for the Athenians was plain, whether it must in any case have led to subjugation at last or not. And the voice of Demosthenes never gave an uncertain sound. We cannot believe that in his own heart he at any crisis had a long struggle or a deep perplexity as to the patriotic course. To such a life, failure, or even tragic death, only comes as a crown of martyrdom, glorifying and sanctifying all its struggles.

Cicero's natural gifts were far more bountiful. His education was much more many-sided, laborious, and prolonged. It is perhaps easy to believe that under equally simple conditions his patriotism would have been almost as steadfast, burning, all-pervading a passion as that of the Greek orator. We can easily imagine him, for instance, in the age of Pyrrhus or Hannibal, as inflexible in his opposition to dishonorable peace as Appius Claudius, whose words we read idealized in Ennius's noble verses, and certainly far more eloquent than he.

But Cicero's lot fell in those unhappy days when Romans

no longer had a dreaded foreign foe to fight. That sturdy commonalty to which the great though rude earlier orators, down to Cato's old age, had so effectively appealed was already rapidly vanishing. The independent peasant farmer had nearly disappeared from Italy, and great troops of slaves farmed the estates of princely nobles. The common people of the city were already demoralized by the inpouring wealth of foreign conquest. The cry, "*panem et circenses*"—free food and brutalizing amusements—was already loudly heard. The rabble was made up of all nationalities. Sulla alone admitted thousands of freedmen into his own Cornelian name. The exercise of the franchise seems to have been a mere question of the heaviest clubs or bribes. The story, for instance, of Milo's and Clodius's quarrels makes us wonder that the Roman patriot felt he had a people to appeal to at all. If there was a contested election, each noble candidate marshalled his thousands of clients, freedmen, and armed bravos to overawe the centuries. Of course, simplicity and the ruder virtues were not unknown, at least in other parts of Italy. The early home life of Cicero himself, of Horace, and others, makes this clear. But it was the curse of the imperial city, as of her world-wide subjects, that no better government for the whole unwieldy empire could supersede that turbulent town meeting.

The great nobles all enriched themselves mercilessly at the expense of the hapless provincials, usually securing enough also to bribe the jury if an attempt was made to impeach them for extortion after their return. There were no honest Roman provincial governors. Cicero, indeed, was humane; and yet he brought back a fortune from his one year in poor, rugged Cilicia. The noble Brutus was murderous, as well as shamelessly dishonest, in his determination to fleece his defenseless Greek debtors. (See *ad Att. VI.*, 1, 5-6.) A Lucullus or a Verres played the same character on a larger stage. And these ill-gotten millions were squandered upon the villas, the gardens, the fish-ponds, the banquets, and the vices of as selfish, heartless, and purposeless an aristocracy as the world has ever seen.

Through such a turbid sea, of selfishness above and brutishness below, Cæsar comes pushing his way steadily toward the slippery rock of supreme power, which even the Scipios in their day might have seized with little danger of effective resistance, which Marius had actually grasped, though with the mere grip of a savage. If half the tales of Cæsar's dissolute youth be true, his was the most wonderful assertion of a loftier self, at forty years, that was ever recorded. While immensely farther-sighted and more masterful than any contemporary, he was no doubt, like Napoleon, above all an opportunist. He took prompter advantage than others of conditions as they arose; conditions which no man could steadily and adequately foresee.

Pompey and Crassus were successful dull-witted commanders, jealous because the older nobility did not value their exploits as they felt they deserved. These two Cæsar easily played off against each other and made his young ambition's ladder, until he was strong enough to mount without them.

Cicero's instincts, I say, seem to have been always those of a patriot. Even Octavian Augustus, long years after, found his grandson reading a book of Cicero, took it from the frightened boy's hands, unrolled musingly many a page, and handed it back at last with the words: "That was the work of a good man who truly loved his country." The murderer's judgment upon his victim was not too generous.

But surely there were many days in his life when the golden-tongued orator hardly knew whither to turn in quest of that ideal fatherland he so often apostrophizes. For instance, Cicero was not in the secret of Cæsar's assassins; Shakspeare says, because Cicero would feel he must be first in all their counsels. But it may be doubted if they were even sure of his whole-hearted sympathy. There was hardly among them much serious pretense of high motives, patriotic or personal. Such a doubt, whether there was any Roman state still worth the saving from tyranny or anarchy, is uttered often enough by Cicero in his desponding moments. The doubt must really have haunted nearly all his

career. It explains, more charitably and more justly than mere cynically selfish motives, much of his vacillation. It may aid also in explaining what we nearly all feel, the strange unreality in his most impassioned speeches. They are, nearly always, the brilliant performances of an accomplished stylist and actor, who almost carries away his audience: I mean his cold, critical, modern audience: because he almost, but never quite, forgets himself.

Cicero was born at Arpinum, in Southeast Latium. Marius was his townsman, remotely connected by marriage; and no doubt his example stimulated the ambition of the Ciceros. If we carry back the reformed calendar of Cæsar to this time, Marcus, son of Marcus, and father of an ignoble final Marcus, was born in October, 107 B. C., not, as is usually stated, on January 3, 106 B. C. His only brother, Quintus, was a little younger. He too had a rather undutiful son, who bore his name. Arpinum enjoyed the full Roman franchise, but the family was plebeian; and though raised to equestrian rank, or as an Englishman would say, belonging to the gentry, by right of wealth, had never held any Roman office. Marcus himself, it may be remembered, "smiles at the claim of long descent," for himself, in a passage often read for its vigorous attack upon the lying family chronicles and funeral orations which had only darkened the current of early Roman annals. (Brutus, XVI., 62. And yet Plutarch alludes to a tradition that traced the family back to Volscian kings.) Moreover, the race became extinct with the orator's son, who alone escaped the proscription in which Marcus and the two Quintuses perished. The elder Quintus, with a bad temper and cruel instincts as a provincial governor, had literary and military ability of the second order; but with that partial exception the line produced one great man only: "One, but a lion!" as Æsop says.

Of their mother, Marcus tells us never a word; and Quintus only alludes (ad Fam. XVI. 26) to her sealing up even the empty wine jars, in their boyhood, to prevent any chance of forbidden visits to the cellar. It was probably Marcus's brilliant promise that drew the family to Rome.

The father was always delicate, but did not die until 64 B. C., just before Marcus's election as consul. Of Cicero's early training and tastes, there are some charming glimpses in his oration defending his old teacher, the Greek poet Archias. Interesting too is the passage (*De Amicitia* 1, 2) where we have a picture of him "studying law" under the two great Scaevolae, the augur and the pontifex. But especially important is the full account of his oratorical studies in Rome and Greece, and of his early triumphs, in the *Brutus* (§§ 308-324.) There is a graphic sketch, even, of his own personal appearance as a slender youth (313) and a striking catalogue of his unique oratorical accomplishments, introduced thus, with characteristic modesty (322): "Nothing will I say of myself; but of the others, not one had endeavored to raise himself above the common herd of men as to literary style, in which is the very source of finished eloquence; not one had mastered philosophy, mother of all noble acts and utterances; not one had studied civil law, acquired Roman history," etc. The preparation which in the *De Oratore* Crassus demands of the perfect orator, viz., the mastery of all studies and all accomplishments, Cicero strove to realize fully in himself, and was well satisfied with the result.

Even after his early triumphs had made him sought after for important cases, he withdrew for two years (80-79 B.C.) to Greece, and, especially, renewed his studies in Rhodes under Molon, from whom he had already had instruction when the Rhodian orator was on an embassy to Rome. The especial effect of this last training was to remove a certain excessive violence of delivery, which endangered his health, and an "Asiatic floridness and over fullness in his style." This last assurance may well astonish us, to whom he seems the most florid and copious of writers. The master of Roman criticism, Quintilian, has well said that in Demosthenes's periods "not a word can be spared, to Cicero's not one could be added." Surely his earlier style must have been flowery and ornate indeed. But after all, he was an Italian, preparing himself to appeal to the passionate, excitable, Italian populace; and his success is the best of vindications. He

could always win their ears, and almost always sway their hearts. The decisive failures of his life were not upon the rostrum.

These studies were interrupted once only by a brief campaign in the Social War in his nineteenth year. (This is commemorated by a delightful little anecdote of courtesy between opposing generals, in Cicero's *Philippics*, xii. 27.) Indeed this too might be called part of his preparation, since the orator must know everything. Any Roman, by the way, seems capable of turning soldier at a moment's warning. Even the recluse and pedant Varro twice left his books for the field, and won some honors there. Cicero felt he earned a triumph in Cilicia. Cæsar himself had had no large military experience when at forty he went to Spain as *proprætor*, and in one campaign acquired both enormous wealth and fame as a consummate strategist.

Cicero began his public life, naturally enough, with democratic sympathies. The terrible excesses of Marius and his partisans, which he witnessed as a youth of eighteen, did not convert him. Perhaps local and family pride blinded the eyes of the Ciceros somewhat to the faults of Marius. But Sulla and his nobler born accomplices were quite as bloodthirsty and mercenary five years later. Sulla believed firmly that he had at least lopped off all the capable heads of the democratic party, and made the rule of the *Optimates*—the old Senatorial families—sure and permanent. In this full belief he abdicated the dictatorship a year before his death. Perhaps Sulla was half right. The proscriptions, like the Spanish Inquisition, resulted in the survival of the unfittest. Something like a wave of popular enthusiasm we seem still to see following the career of the eloquent young lawyer Cicero himself, carrying all the centuries for him as *prætor*, placing him at the head of the poll for consul. But if so, it is the last real appearance of the people as an intelligent force. Pompey tried to widen the basis of his own personal influence by increasing the power of the only middle class Rome knew, the *equites*: that is, simply citizens from families not ennobled by high office, whose wealth

raised them above a certain minimum of taxable property. But this class was quite as selfish and unpatriotic as any other, and pretty fully absorbed in commerce proper or in farming the State revenues. The horde that Cæsar led, in peace or war—more and more fully under his control from the days of Cicero's consulship, or earlier, until his own permanent dictatorship satisfied his ambition—can hardly be suspected of any intelligent or generous patriotism. Rome, high and low, needed a master, and the man had appeared. For the rest of Italy, and especially for the Provincials, that is, practically, for the whole of mankind, it was a happy day when they came to have one permanent tyrant. Varro may have lived to realize this. Cicero's death, tragic as it was, only hastened the necessary end. But it is fully time to turn to the details of his public career. Eight points in that career interest us most:

1. The defense of Roscius Amerinus, 80 B.C.
2. The impeachment of Verres, 70 B.C.
3. The events of 63 B.C.: the consulship, execution of the conspirators, and overtures to the Optimates.
4. Cicero's exile, 58–57 B.C.
5. His return, attempt at thwarting Cæsar, and abject submission.
6. His vacillation in 50–49 on the verge of the civil war.
7. His over-hasty return to Italy and submission to Cæsar.
8. His exultation at Cæsar's murder, and twenty months' struggle against Antony, from March, 44, to December, 43.

The first three dates, unfortunately, fall before the time when the confidential letters to Atticus fully unlock the writer's heart for us; two of them previous even to the earliest scattering letters. Yet in regard to all these events it will probably be found easy to form definite opinions.

As the story of Cicero's defense of Roscius Amerinus is told to us, chiefly in the extant oration itself, the act shows much courage, even though Cicero modestly says it was forced upon him by his personal relations and made safe by his own obscurity. There is some reason to think he was assured of protection by friends of Sulla: especially by

the noble lady Caecilia, who had saved the unhappy young Roscius's life. An Umbrian millionaire, the elder Roscius, had been found murdered in Rome. It was just at the close of the Sullan proscriptions, of which many private assassins took advantage to "remove" their personal enemies or to line their purses. Sulla's suspension of the proscriptions had not been rigorously enforced. The dead Umbrian's name was now smuggled into the list of proscribed. Two unscrupulous kinsmen of his, perhaps the real murderers, and Cornelius Chrysogonus, an all-powerful freedman and favorite of Sulla, secured his confiscated estates for the merest trifle. When the son complained of this, the plotters arranged to remove him also by charging him with his own father's murder.

The case was tried before a jury of senators. There does not appear to have been any proof or even probability against young Roscius. He was on the Umbrian estates at the time of the murder. Yet all the older lawyers feared to defend him, and his conviction by the jury was fully expected, because under the existing reign of terror no one dared thwart the favorite of the dictator. Cicero's action was a creditable one, and his success, won by arousing in the timid jury sufficient courage and humanity to acquit the innocent youth, is considered one of his great triumphs. Plutarch says that Sulla himself directed the prosecution of the son, being angry that his act of confiscation had been questioned. This is not Cicero's avowed theory, certainly. He repeats carefully (9, 25): "It is understood, judges, as I have said before, that it was without L. Sulla's knowledge that these crimes and outrages occurred." We rarely know whether Plutarch has a vague memory or more complete information than we. This was in 80 B.C., in Cicero's twenty-seventh year. It appears to have been the first criminal process after Sulla handed over the judicial power from the equites to the senators. Perhaps Sulla himself did not wish their first decision to be so discreditable.

Cicero in after years often speaks of this case, and shows elation at his success. However, it was precisely the next

two years that he spent in travel and study, returning after Sulla's death. So perhaps his first appearance in a criminal case really came near putting an end to his career at once. Plutarch says positively: "Fearing Sulla, he traveled into Greece, and gave out that he did so for the benefit of his health." That was true enough in any case.

The impression which Cicero gives us, that he has left this juvenile speech untouched, is not easy to accept. Some of the half-veiled criticisms of the existing régime appear quite too bold and too impolitic for the circumstances. We know that Cicero, in many other cases besides his defense of Milo, published the speech "as it should have been delivered." After writing this, it is encouraging to notice that Drumann has based the same opinion upon the very sentence which roused my own incredulity—namely, the epigram in § 1, 3. "For myself, if I speak too freely, it will pass unnoticed, because I am not yet in public office, or mercy will be shown for my youth's sake; though *not merely the habit of mercy but even of inquiry has disappeared from the state in these days.*" The word *nondum* (not yet), especially, may betray the later hand. Altogether, we have not the means for deciding just how bold Cicero showed himself on this occasion; creditable his action undoubtedly was.

Cicero was questor in Sicily in 75-4 B.C. I am especially interested in his account of a brilliant archæological exploit during his stay there. He rediscovered the tomb of Archimedes, outside the gates of Syracuse, by the help of a literary tradition recording the inscription. He sought successfully the sphere and cylinder upon the tomb, which were mentioned in the epitaph. (Tusc. Disp. V., 23, 64.)

Cicero really was humane, as has been said. His aversion to the gladiatorial sports is a genuine illustration thereof. The sufferings of the provincials filled him with indignation. His relations with many Sicilians from this time on were most affectionate. His impeachment of the great governor Verres in B. C. 70 does credit to his heart: but also no less to his head. His splendid energy in collecting an irresistible mass of evidence, his self-restraint in presenting it at

once, after a very brief introductory speech, carried everything before it. Verres fled without a struggle, though Hortensius, until that day foremost of Roman lawyers, had undertaken his defense.

This was not, however, an act of perilous heroism, as the Roscian speech may have been. The new times permitted comparative freedom of utterance at least. The orator had now unlimited and well-grounded confidence in his own powers. His effort was, in fact, liberally rewarded with fame and popularity, and he attained at a bound the leadership of the bar.

Moreover this case was practically, if not avowedly, part of a larger political movement. The reactionary aristocratic constitution of Sulla had remained essentially intact through the eight years since his death. But now a movement was on foot to restore the power of the popular tribunes, and also to hand back the right of sitting as jurymen, in such trials as this, from the senators themselves, too often interested in whitewashing one of their own ring, to the equites, who had held it for forty years down to the time of Sulla. Or rather, the juries were now to be divided among the senators, the equites, and the "tribunes of the treasury." The law to effect this change was already proposed, and its enactment foreshadowed. The scandal of Verres's case probably aided in making the submission of the senate to the measure a political necessity.

This championship of the equites at an important crisis—70 B.C., in Pompey's first consulship—brought closer together Cicero, the son of an eques, and Pompey, whose father, first of his family, had won high official rank by his sword in the Social War, but had never gained a firm place among the older nobility. This regard for Pompey never wholly left Cicero, but seems to have been a very mixed feeling, with little hearty admiration and confidence in it. The two rested their political influence upon nearly the same classes, both suffered from the jealousy of the old nobility, and they stand almost unique among the Romans of their day in the purity of their private life.

Cicero's consulship, like his other honors, he undoubtedly won almost wholly by his splendid eloquence. We who read the speeches with cold comment, in text-books, can never realize how eagerly men sought his voice for each struggling cause and burning question. Then, too, the old noble families may well have seen the Catilinarian storm coming, and have felt that the people's orator had better be put forward to crush the aristocratic demagogues and revolutionists, if such they were.

Upon the events of the year 63 we have all heard much from Cicero himself in the Catilinarian orations. We have no other full and independent account at first hand, unless it be Sallust's, which does not inspire the fullest confidence. There is a general feeling that Catiline's side of the story has never been told at all, and that if his plans had been so wicked and so wild as they are painted he could hardly have had so many and able adherents. That Cæsar had cordial relations, at least, with the ringleaders is more than probable, and his effort to have the death-sentence commuted was doubtless prompted by motives other than humane.

Just how much responsibility Cicero had for the executions is not easy to determine. Cato's insistence carried the vote in the senate, and is an instance of his unfailing wrongheadedness, of which Cicero himself complains on other occasions. The ex-consul has a habit in later years of claiming all, or only a very little, of the responsibility, according to the times and his own political prospects. It is further interesting to note that in his subsequent defense of Cælius, charged with attempting the murder of Clodia, Cicero finds it necessary to draw a greatly modified portrait of the diabolical archconspirator, with whom Cælius had confessedly been intimately associated in early life. This was only seven years later: instructive years, to be sure, for Cicero's own exile lay between. He attempts, after a fashion, to save his veracity as to the earlier diatribes. (*Pro Cælio*. V. ad fin.) "Nor do I think that there ever existed on the earth such a monster, so compounded of impulses

and desires diverse and at strife with each other." That is, "all the evil I said of Catiline then, and all the lighter tints I need to-day, make a strange and incredible creature." And they do, indeed.

The execution of the conspirators was probably, technically, illegal; though the point is a delicate one. (See Watson's Cicero, pages 131, 132). The right of appeal to the people was sufficiently established. Yet it had often been ignored, and must be ignored in a state of civil war. The exigency did not *self-evidently* demand the immediate execution, though the act may have prevented a popular revolution. It seems to have been on Cicero's part the act of a physically timid man, frightened out of his usually humane instincts, and somewhat misled by an exaggerated feeling as to the importance of his own personal safety to the existence of the state. "An attempt has been made to murder me, 'patrem patriæ,' in my bed! Anarchy is at the door. Terrible dangers justify stern remedies. The serpent of conspiracy must be beheaded at least." Politically, of course, the executions were an error, or a choice between evils. And they worked out their natural penalties.

Just why Cicero passed on to the party of the Optimates in the course of this year cannot be fully explained. His own position seemed now assured. Every anarchist even, it is said, becomes a conservative when he acquires property. The popular leaders were, at least at first, generally entangled with Catiline. (Sallust, "Catiline," § 37.) The flattering social and personal advances of the great nobles may have affected a man of humble origin, as the Southern gentlemen are said to have won Andrew Johnson, a poor man from a border State, in 1865 and the following years. A clear *proof* of the change is the praise of the Gracchi in January, 63 ("De Lege Agraria," II., 5, ad init.): "Two men most illustrious, most able, most devoted to the Roman people;" and again, "I am not, however, a consul who, like most, think it a sin to praise the Gracchi," etc. This is in evident contrast with the familiar passages from the Catilinarian speeches of November (*e. g.*, I, 1, 3 and I, 2, 4),

where the *murderers* of the Gracchi are lauded, and their brave deeds adduced as suitable precedents for Cicero's own action against revolutionists.

Cicero did not accept the usual opportunity to recoup his fortunes, after the outlay of a canvass and a consular year, by squeezing the natives of a foreign province. Of the two governorships placed by the senate at the disposal of the consuls, he turned the richer prize, Macedonia, over to his colleague Antonius, probably to keep him from playing into Catiline's hands. The other he handed on to Metellus Celer, one of the pretors in 63. This has given occasion for what the Germans call an "ingenious combination" bearing upon a famous chapter of literary history, or of the *Chronique scandaleuse*. This second consular province was Cis-Alpine Gaul. So, if Metellus took his wife Clodia with him, and if Catullus's father entertained the Roman governor in Verona then, as we know he did Cæsar eight or ten years later, and if this Clodia was Catullus' "Lesbia"—then, perhaps, these dishonest and unhappy lovers owed their first acquaintance, indirectly, to a man whom Clodia had offered to marry, and Catullus has complimented in verse, but whom both detested, as I believe, the patriot Cicero.

Cicero perhaps thought his exile due to the persistent malevolence of Clodius Pulcher, who had been discredited, though not convicted, through Cicero's testimony, when on trial for intruding on the feminine celebration of Bona Dea's rites. Cicero deserved some punishment, indeed, for pursuing Clodius thereafter with coarse witticisms, not excepting revolting allusions to the sister, Clodia.

But Clodius Pulcher was probably a mere pawn in the hands of the most astute, cool-headed, and far-sighted of political gamesters. Julius Cæsar had now acquired a sufficient ascendancy over the two most powerful generals of his time, Pompey and Crassus. There are few more pitiful delusions in Cicero's letters than his boast (*Ad Att. II., 1, 6*) that he has already secured Pompey to the cause of good government, and may win Cæsar also: "What if even Cæsar, with whom the wind is now so fair, be won over by me?"

Shall I be doing so much harm to the state?" This was written in June, 60, and the cabal known as the first triumvirate was already forming.

In after years Cicero declared that it had rested with himself to make this "triumvirate" four-cornered; and a passage in a contemporary letter tends to bear him out. (Ad Att. II. 3, 3, Dec. 60 B.C.): Balbus had promised, in his master Cæsar's name, that "he will in all matters consult me and Pompey, and will also see to it that Pompey and Crassus are united."

But—call it self-confidence or patriotism, as we will—Cicero dallied, and hoped for better things. Time ran short. Cæsar was soon to depart for Gaul for a long term of years. There he must forge patiently the only weapon which could make secure the imperial power he craved: a devoted army. For that, time was imperative. Before his departure, Cæsar's eagle eye scanned his possible rivals. Crassus and Pompey could be safely left to thwart each other, and exhaust by wrongheadedness or selfishness in local Roman affairs the popularity their swords had won them. Toward such warriors, boggling in politics also, popular contempt would be bred by familiarity. The growing sloth of the older aristocrats like Lucullus and Hortensius made them harmless. Catullus died in 60. Cato was too ruggedly impracticable to lead any party long.

But Cicero was a more serious problem. His dreams of an aristocratic reaction under his own lead were too vivid. His personal popularity was a real and permanent factor which his eloquent tongue might in any great crisis make a dangerous one. His wings must be cruelly clipped in order to cripple fatally that influence.

Now, as Pompey shared with Cicero his purity of private life, so Cæsar shared with him a quality equally rare among Romans, an aversion to needless violence and bloodshed; or, at least, to the shedding of Roman blood. Assassination would not have been a surprising solution; but Cæsar tried gentler ways; offered a place on his staff of generals, such as brother Quintus accepted; put in Marcus's way, also, a

roving "free legation" (like President Grant's gift, an "inspectorship of consulates"), which would take him back to his favorite Greek haunts under honorable conditions.

All these were declined. And at last Clodius was allowed to bring up his decree prohibiting from fire and water any who had put Roman citizens to death illegally. The hand of Cæsar is in every move. He is indeed the only man of that time who always knew what he wanted, and knew how men should be managed that it might be secured.

Cicero's conduct throughout the period of his exile was contemptible. His immediate withdrawal from Rome, though he was actually not named in the first bill, and though thousands are said to have put on mourning to show their sympathy with him, was, even in his own later judgment, pusillanimous. While absent, his inkstand is a fountain of ignoble lamentations, mixed with most unjust complaints of selfish indifference, aimed at Atticus, and of treachery, heaped upon nearly every other friend he had, including Cato and Hortensius. Atticus must have been abnormally pachydermatous, if he did not make cutting and impatient replies—his letters are all lost—to some of these querulous screeds.

All real students should certainly read with care the letter to Atticus (Book IV., No. 1), describing Cicero's return from exile and first appearance in Rome. Even that begins with a magnanimous consent to forgive Atticus his shortcomings as a friend and adviser. The crowds that turned out to stare at the returning chieftain from Brundisium to the city gate seemed to him all Italy welcoming back "patrem patriæ." At the close there is a hint, probably, that his wife, Terentia, has not satisfied him as to financial matters during his absence. "As to property affairs, I am, you know, much disturbed. Moreover there are certain family matters which I do not trust to a letter." A similar dispute, apparently, at last caused Terentia's divorce, after thirty years of married life. Like most multi-millionaires, Cicero was desperately poor and harassed for money nearly all his life.

Cicero was so elated by his home return that he at first again fancied that he could put himself at the head of the party of the Optimates and make, through the senate, an effective opposition to Cæsar's political progress. From this eminence he was "called down" in an instant by a sharp admonition from the triumvirs, conveyed through brother Quintus. Marcus had induced the senate to set a future day (May 15, 56) for discussing the legality of the agrarian law, carried by Cæsar three years before, to divide Campanian lands among Pompey's veterans and needy citizens. This was a rash blow at both the great men. It had perhaps a prominent place among the events which led to the great conference of Cæsar's faction at Lucca, where the triumvirs' alliance was more firmly cemented. Cicero tries to cover his own mortifying submission by complaining of the ingratitude and jealousy shown by the old nobles; but his account of the whole period, set forth in the long letter to Lentulus, which seems like a semipublic "*Apologia pro vita mea*," is sorry reading—an apology rather than an *Ἀπολογία*, says Prof. Tyrrell. (Ad Fam. I. 9: §§ 4-18 especially.) His submission was abjectly complete. From 56 until his reluctant departure to Cilicia as proconsul, in 51, he did what he was bidden. In this very year 56 he withdrew the obnoxious motion, made an apology to Cæsar, and took a leading part in a debate whereby he secured to Cæsar the unopposed retention of both Gauls for the full ten years. In 54 he even defended his inveterate personal enemies, Vatinius and Gabinius.

While discussing Cicero's action in the great crises, we must never forget this whole series of years, and those others during Cæsar's dictatorship, through which he played a most ignoble part as chief pervert from the cause he at heart still cherished. The only adequate excuse for this ostentatious submission, viz., that he had come to believe the Romans unworthy of, or unfit for, anything save a tyranny, he has himself cut off by his later utterances. Nay, even his private letters in these very years show that he felt that life was hardly worth accepting on such terms. We can have

sympathy, mixed with some pity, for such a man; but we can hardly make him an ideal moral hero.

The governorship of Cilicia Cicero accepted most unwillingly for a single year. He was as homesick for Italy as Dr. Johnson when away from London. His alert and cultured mind drew no inspiration, it would seem, from the scenery or the older civilizations of Asia. Despite his much-vaunted probity and undoubted humanity, a respectable fortune flowed into his private coffers in these brief months. What must have been the temptations and the gains of a Verres in such a province as Sicily!

The civil war was already inevitable when Cicero returned from Cilicia. He hesitated long, and was as much concerned about his own prospect of a triumph, for his successes against the nameless tribes of Asia Minor, as about the fate of the commonwealth. Every phase, almost every hourly reconsideration, of this long mental debate is recorded in the letters to Atticus. The bewildering array of minor motives and remote possibilities wearies the reader. One curious fact is clear: that Cicero actually liked, perhaps loved, Cæsar, was fascinated and attracted to him, as he was repelled by Pompey's bluff soldierly selfishness. The brief letters of Cæsar to Cicero in these days (like *e. g.*, ad Att. ix. 16 and x. 8 B.), though mere hasty notes scribbled on the march, are marvels of skill and flattery. They even leave a clinging tenderness for the writer in us as we read. Pompey, on the contrary (see, *e. g.*, ad Att., viii. 11, A.), is as gruff and imperative as a German corporal to his green recruit.

From Pompey's camp in Greece we hear little directly, *i. e.*, in Cicero's correspondence. The story has to be pieced out at this point from Plutarch, who says that after Pharsalia Cicero was offered the chief command, but refused, was threatened with death by young Pompey, and rescued by Cato.

What is certain is that, after having deliberated so long before joining the Pompeians, he was the first to hasten back to Italy and to make his submission to Cæsar, after the

one great defeat. He actually had the misery, during many following months, of dreading the final triumph, after all, of Cæsar's enemies, being rightly assured that he would now be the first victim of their vengeance.

Of his position as Cæsar's most illustrious courtier there are vivid glimpses in the well-known orations "Pro Ligario" and "Pro Marcello." They show all the orator's pride of intellect, but their flattery of the dictator reminds us involuntarily of Whittier's bitter lines, entitled "Ichabod," written after what New Englanders used to call Daniel Webster's submission to the slave power in his seventh of March speech:

"From those great eyes
The soul has fled;
When faith is lost, when honor dies,
The man is dead."

He did not act his part so well, however, but that Cæsar himself realized how irksome and hateful it was to the elder, vainer, and more self-conscious Cicero. This second period of humiliation runs from the landing at Brundisium, November 48 B. C. (See ad Att. XI. 5), to the very day of Cæsar's murder, March 15, 44.

The divorce of Terentia was at or about the close of 46. If there were other reasons than her mismanagement of money affairs, we do not know them. He soon after married a rich young ward of his own, and parted with her after a very brief and unhappy married life. It is said that she had expressed something like relief at the death of Tullia, of whose influence she was jealous. This is the least agreeable chapter in Cicero's private life, and we have not evidence enough to adjudge him worthy of more mortification and suffering than he seems to have brought upon himself.

That he was not in the secret of the Ides of March is certain, whatever the reason. His letter to Cassius about ten months later (ad Familiares XII. 4) begins, "I could wish you had invited me to your banquet on the Ides of March. There would have been no remnants"—*i. e.*, "Cæ-

sar's colleague in the consulship and ablest partisan, Mark Antony, would not have been left to plague us as he is doing, if I had planned the assassination." And the ghastly metaphor pleases its author so well that he repeats it, with a rhetorical touch or two added, in the first sentences of a letter about the same time to another one of the conspirators, Gaius Trebonius (ad Fam. X. 28): "How I wish you had invited me to that most delightful banquet on the Ides of March. We should have no remnants, whereas now there is so much trouble with them," etc.

Undoubtedly the last of Cicero's years is among the most creditable of them all. Of bravery, at least the cool soldierly sort, I do not see much in his composition. It rarely goes with the scholarly sensitiveness, perhaps, though sensitive and refined men may overcome the dread of violence and death which they cannot but feel deeply. Savonarola's last days appear to illustrate both sides of this truth, though we have his statements upon the rack only in a report hostile to his memory. The courage of Cicero's closing scene seems, however, rather that of the stag at bay. Certainly after his masterpiece—not exactly of oratory, since it was never delivered, but of political pamphleteering—the second Philippic, was issued, in the autumn of 44, he could hardly have had any hope of life unless Antony could be crushed.

It chances that a fragment from a lost book of Livy survives, in which the historian expresses a characteristically Roman judgment upon Cicero's lack of stoical firmness in disaster: "He bore none of his calamities with becoming spirit, save only his death." As Merivale remarks, the Roman was rare indeed who, like Nero, dallied and shivered in the presence of his inevitable end. Livy, I suppose, was disgusted especially with Cicero's lamentations in banishment. But homesickness is not essentially ignoble, and the wound to his pride also must in those days have bled painfully. Probably letters quite as querulous and unreasonable have been written by many an illustrious exile; but, happily for their writers' fame, they have not been preserved and published.

That weakness, then, we might find it in our hearts to forgive.

His greatest sin I hold to have been the premature desertion of the Pompeians. He had chosen his side. He says he saw much to disapprove in the Pompeian camp; heard such threats of massacre and proscription that he dreaded victory almost more than defeat. But he awaited the issue of the decisive battle. After that, surely only a soldier's duty remained: fidelity to his flag; or, such a Roman as Cato or Brutus might add, a fall upon his own sword. It is only fair to say here, however, that the author of the twentieth chapter in the "*De Senectute*" shared Plato's opinion, and our own, that suicide would have been a still more unpardonable desertion of his post. But that precipitate return to Italy leaves upon Cicero the indelible brand of the deserter and the coward.

The final scene, on December 7, 43 B. C., is too familiar for repetition. Cicero loved Italy and detested exile so deeply that imminent death itself could not fix his determination upon flight. His last act was to forbid his slaves and attendants from flinging away their own lives in the vain attempt to save his.

It is curious that we cannot help taking a side, with some warmth of personal feeling, while we study the successive acts of this wonderfully crowded and varied life. This is due, perhaps, to the complete self-expression of the man. That self-utterance is found above all in his private letters, but also in his philosophical works, his rhetorical dialogues, and in some degree, of course, even in his orations, full as they are of posing and phrasing. We seem to know Cicero as each of us knows himself. He becomes at last to us the type of human nature, so that his cowardice or hesitation or selfishness is an injury to us all. Possibly this is the greatest boon from such a life, that still impresses upon remotest ages and races the essential oneness of humanity.

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